

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 L-02 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SY-05

SCCT-01 NIC-01 /060 W
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R 271230Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3211

INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY MEXICO CITY

AMEMBASSY PORT

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, DR

SUBJECT: MORE REACTIONS TO JOURNALIST'S MURDER

REF: 1271, SD 1227, SD 1210

1. SUMMARY. FEW LEADS HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED BY POLICE FOLLOWING MURDER ON MARCH 17 OF ORLANDO MARTINEZ, ONE OF DR'S LEADING JOURNALISTS. EX-PRESIDENT JUAN BOSCH HAS DENIED ALLEGATIONS THAT HE OR MEMBERS OF HIS PARTY WERE INVOLVED AND HAS REFUSED TO COOPERATE WITH POLICE. PRD SEC GEN PENA GOMEZ HAS AGREED TO TALK TO POLICE BUT ONLY IF THEY COME TO HIM AT PARTY HEADQUARTERS. EXTREME LEFT DOUBTS THAT KILLER OR KILLERS WILL EVER BE FOUND AND SUGGESTS THIS WILL CONSTITUTE PROOF THAT AGENTS OF GODR ITSELF COMMITTED THE CRIME. TWO AFTERNOON AND ONE MORNING PAPER AND LARGE PROPORTION RADIO COMMENTATORS HEEDED CALL BY JOURNALISTS SYNDICATE FOR CEASING PUBLICATION AND BROADCASTING OF NEWS MARCH 21 BUT FAILURE OF TWO MORNING AND ONE AFTERNOON PAPERS AND SEVERAL RADIO-TV STATIONS AND COMMENTATORS TO FOLLOW STRIKE
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CALL SET OFF BITTER INTRAPRESS ACRIMONY. END SUMMARY.

2. MOTIVES. POLICE, LIKE OBSERVERS, REVIEWED RECENT COLUMNS BY ORLANDO MARTINEZ TO SEE WHO, HAVING BEEN ATTACKED MOST EFFECTIVELY BY COLUMNIST, MIGHT HAVE HAD MOTIVE FOR SILENCING HIM. HIGH ON LIST WAS EX-PRESIDENT JUAN BOSCH, LEADER OF PARTIDO DE LA LIBERACION DOMINICANA (PLD), WHO HAD BEEN SUBJECTED TO SCATHING AND VERY TELLING CRITICISMS IN FOUR COLUMNS WRITTEN NOT LONG BEFORE MARTINEZ WAS MURDERED. POLICE ARE NOW HOLDING FIVE PLD MEMBERS AND ON MARCH 23 SUMMONED JUAN BOSCH FOR QUESTIONING. BOSCH DENIED THAT HIS PARTY OR SUPPORTERS HAD ANY CONNECTION WHATSOEVER TO CRIME AND NOT ONLY REFUSED TO APPEAR FOR QUESTIONING BUT PUBLICLY STATED HE WOULD NOT RECEIVE POLICE ANYWHERE TO ANSWER THEIR QUESTIONS. HE PRESENTED HIS POSITION IN MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT BALAGUER, TEXT OF WHICH HE RELEASED TO PRESS. PRESIDENT REPLIED TO MESSAGE WITH PUBLIC INSTRUCTION TO CHIEF OF POLICE TO SHOW BOSCH RESPECT DUE EX-PRESIDENT OF REPUBLIC AND POLITICAL PARTY LEADER. CHIEF OF POLICE THEN ANNOUNCED THAT BOSCH WOULD NOT BE QUESTIONED. PARTIDO REVOLUCIONARIO DOMINICANO (PRD) SEC GEN FRANCISCO PENA GOMEZ, ORDERED TO APPEAR FOR QUESTIONING, PUBLICLY REFUSED BUT STATED HE WOULD ANSWER QUESTIONS IF POLICE WOULD COME TO PRD HEADQUARTERS. BOTH BOSCH AND PENA GOMEZ CHARACTERIZED POLICE ACTIONS AS AIMED AGAINST POLITICAL OPPOSITION TO THE REGIME.

3. PRESS DIVIDED. SINDICATO NACIONAL DE PERIODISTAS PROFESIONALES (SNPP) CALLED FOR CESSATION OF PUBLICATION OF DAILY NEWSPAPERS MARCH 21 AND FOR SILENCE THAT DAY OF RADIO AND TV NEWS REPORTING. SNPP PROPOSAL SPLIT PRESS DOWN THE MIDDLE, WITH MORE CONSERVATIVE E1 CARIBE, LISTIN DIARIO AND ULTIMA HORA DECLINING TO CEASE PUBLICATION WPDLE EL SOL, EL NACIONAL AND LA NOTICIA WELCOMED THE MOVE. THOSE RADIO AND TV COMMENTATORS AND STATIONS GENERALLY CRITICAL OF GOVERNMENT TENDED COMPLY WITH DEMONSTRATION REQUEST WHILE MORE CONSERVATIVE AND OUTRIGHT GOVERNMENT SUPPORTERS REMAINED ON THE AIR. EDITORIAL IN LISTIN DIARIO ACCUSED SNPP AND OTHER PROPONENTS OF CESSATION OF PUBLICATION OF "CAPITALIZING INCREDIBLY ON ASSASSINATION OF ORLANDO MARTINEZ FOR OTHER OBJECTIVES." EL SOL REPLIED THAT LISTIN DIARIO'S COMMENTS REPRESENTED A LACK OF RESPECT FOR CONTRARY OPINIONS. SEVERAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COLUMNISTS JOINED IN ACRIMONIOUS DEBATE ON SUBJECT. SNPP, PARTIDO COMUNISTA DOMINICANO (PCD) AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS ON EXTREME LEFT, HAVE REPEATEDLY STATED THEIR BELIEF THAT REACTIONARY FORCES WITHIN GOVERNMENT WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR MURDER OF MARTINEZ. ON MARCH 21, PRESIDENT RECEIVED SNPP DELEGATION, TO WHOM HE REITERATED HIS OWN SENSE OF LOSS AND SAID THAT ORLANDO MARTINEZ HAD BEEN ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S MOST EFFECTIVE SUPPORTERS OF PRESIDENT'S OWN AGRARIAN REFORM

PROGRAM.

4. COMMENT. EXTREME LEFT HAS BEEN SEEKING TO CONDITION PUBLIC TO ACCEPT ALLEGATIONS THAT FAILURE TO CONDUCT SERIOUS INVESTIGATION AND TO FIND MURDERERS IS EQUIVALENT TO PROOF THAT GOVERNMENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR KILLING AND THAT IN BALAGUER'S REPUBLIC SPOKEN OR WRITTEN WORD IS INEFFECTIVE AND ONLY ACTION COUNTS. ALTHOUGH MURDER HAS CONTRIBUTED TO UNEASINESS IN OPPOSITION PRESS, OF WHICH SOME MEMBERS ALLEGEDLY HAVE RECEIVED THREATENING TELEPHONE CALLS, AND HAS CREATED CERTAIN EFFERVESCENCE IN STUDENT AND OTHER OPPOSITION CIRCLES, NO WIDESPREAD DEMONSTRATIONS APPEAR TO BE IN THE MAKING. HOWEVER, BECAUSE OF ORLANDO MARTINEZ' GREAT POPULARITY, ENHANCED BY HUF YOUTH AND VITALITY, CASE WILL HAVE LONG-ENDURING REPERCUSSIONS.
HURWITCH

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